TO: Superintendent David Lewis

FROM: Jeff Peters

DATE: June 1, 2017

RE: Gender Inequality and Affection in the Classroom

Cases of inappropriate relations between teachers (especially male) and students have created fearful and cautious attitudes for many educators. Because of the media involvement of these cases, parents can see male teachers as a potential danger for their children. Administrators are aware of this dilemma, and it can impact their perspective and influence on male teachers. Male teachers should be seen and treated equally as female teachers, allowing them to operate their classrooms as best as they see fit without the constraints of societal pressures that can compromise optimal educational strategy. I propose an awareness workshop for all principals in the county to address this issue.

In this workshop, principals should be reminded of the value of seeing the classroom as a family unit. Teachers should be promoted—not discouraged—to show appropriate affection to their students. Males are often pressured to be more authoritarian and strict and asked to step into disciplinarian roles not only in their own classroom, but also in other teachers’ classrooms and hallways. This workshop should also focus on the importance of positive male role models on children’s development. A positive male role model should not have to be stern and distant, but instead can be affectionate and fostering. With the large majority of single-parent households being female lead, many children need positive male role models in their lives now more than ever. The Muscogee County School District mission is simple: “to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.” Without a focus on empowering male educators to be the role model and every ounce of teacher these students need, we will always fall short of truly achieving that goal.

This should be a one day event held the week before pre-planning. I have close contact with Dr. Richard Gardiner, Associate Professor of Social Science Education at CSU, who can help coordinate a more detailed plan for the workshop. Principals can take the information and strategies from this workshop to their own schools and implement knowledge in any way they see fit that best suits their unique environment. Principals should be encouraged to inform parents about this new focus on positive male influence so as to gain support and discuss any potential problems parents may have. Please feel free to contact me so we can discuss this plan and work out any details or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jeff Peters